



**ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՁԱՆԳԱՍՏԱՆԻ ԵՐԱՏՎՈՐԹՅԱՆ ՄԻՋՈՇԱՆԵՐԻ ԷԹԻԿՍԻ  
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**EXTRACT FROM THE EXPERT JUDGMENT  
OF MEDIA ETHICS OBSERVATORY  
ON COMPLAINT OF LAWYER LUSINEH HAKOBIAN REGARDING  
INTERVIEW OF ARMEN NADIRIAN, DEPUTY CHIEF OF RA SPECIAL  
INVESTIGATIVE SERVICE, TO “ARAVOT” DAILY**

On April 17, 2013 the Media Ethics Observatory (MEO) received a complaint submitted by lawyer Lusineh Hakobian, who represents Narineh Ismaili, an observer at the 2013 presidential elections, in criminal proceedings connected with electoral violations at a polling station. Lusineh Hakobian appealed the MEO for receiving an expert judgment regarding the interview of Armen Nadirian, Deputy Chief of RA Special Investigative Service, to Ruzan Minasian, correspondent of “Aravot” daily. The piece, “Personal Footage Has Been Submitted to the Central Electoral Commission”, was published on March 29, 2013 in the newspaper and on [www.aravot.am](http://www.aravot.am). In her complaint, Lusineh Hakobian mentioned that she had requested “Aravot” to remove a statement of personal character about Narineh Ismaili as contained in the interview placed on the newspaper’s website. According to Lusineh Hakobian, Ruzan Minasian and editors had violated Narineh Ismaili’s right to private life by citing the disputed statement of the Deputy Chief of Special Investigative Service.

The MEO considers the complaint at the May 8, 2013 session. The MEO states that the interview dealt with an issue of public interest, since it told about the alleged electoral violations during the 2013 presidential elections. At the same time, the MEO believes that there was no need to cite the statement of personal character: this would not anyhow diminish the significance of the discussed issue.

According to the MEO, in the given case a balance should be struck between Armen Nadirian’s (interviewee and co-author of the piece) right to full and adequate reproduction of his speech, and Narineh Ismaili’s right to respect of her private life. Proceeding from the accepted rules of journalistic ethics and the spirit of the Code of Conduct of Media Representatives, it would be desirable that correspondent of “Aravot” refrained from publishing the statement of the Deputy Chief of Special Investigative Service about Narineh Ismaili, more so this would not diminish the value of the story.

The MEO considered that while publishing in full the information provided by a third party, the journalist was not in direct violation of the Code of Conduct of Media Representatives, including Points 4.1 and 4.2, which were recalled in the complaint: “To respect and to protect the human right to private life: public need can only justify interferences with the privacy of officials, public figures, and individuals aspiring to the power or public attention” (4.1.); and “In case of a conflict between the freedom of expression and other fundamental human rights, the medium itself decides what to give preference to and carries responsibility for its decision” (4.2.).

The fact that “Aravot” removed the disputed statement about Narineh Ismaili from its website, right after the MEO received the complaint and made a mediation, indicates the newspaper’s awareness of the undesirability of its publication. Given this and the abovementioned, it would be reasonable, if the daily publicly apologized to Narineh Ismaili; however this suggestion is not binding.

The MEO recommends that the parties adhere to the approaches stated in this judgment and abstain from settling the dispute at court.

***Adopted at the MEO session of May 8, 2013,  
Attended by Yuri Kazakov, Co-Chairman of the Russian Public  
Collegium for Press Complaints.  
In the following composition:***

**Gegham MANUKIAN**, Director of the News and Current Affairs Programs of  
“Yerkir Media” TV company  
**Gnel NALBANDIAN**, Chief Editor of “ArmNews” TV company  
**Nouneh Sarkissian**, Managing Director of “Internews” Media Support NGO  
**Mesrop MOVSESIAN**, Director of “A1+” TV company  
**Ashot MELIKIAN**, Chairman of the Committee to Protect Freedom of Expression  
**Boris NAVASARDIAN**, President of Yerevan Press Club  
**Emmanuil MKRTCHIAN**, General Director of “ArmInfo” news agency  
**Ara GHAZARIAN**, lawyer  
**Gegham BAGHDASARIAN**, Chief Editor of “Analyticon” magazine

*MEO was established by the media, joining the self-regulation initiative, which make 48  
as of today. In its judgments MEO is guided by Code of Conduct of Media  
Representatives, adopted at the self-regulation body’s meeting on March 10, 2007.*